



State of Washington  
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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April 14, 2015

**RE: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife support for the West Uncas culvert replacement project**

To whom it may concern:

As the District Fish Biologist for the eastern Straits and Hood Canal, I am writing to express my strong support for the project to replace the culvert with a bridge on Salmon Creek at west Uncas Road.

Salmon Creek is critical habitat for ESA-listed summer chum that spawn throughout the accessible reaches of this tributary to Discovery Bay. In the last twelve years this important population has expanded as a result of supplementation and habitat work in the estuary and along the lower banks.

However, returning adults are blocked by the perched culvert and WDFW must sandbag temporary step pools each summer to allow fish past the road. In addition to the fish passage issue the culvert has other detrimental effects on hydrological processes that would otherwise stabilize habitat, which would be improved by a bridge.

Working collectively with private landowners, tribes, federal agencies and counties we have made great strides in restoring the threatened summer chum salmon runs in their natural range. This project would open up important spawning habitat and further secure the future of this recovering salmon population.

Thank you,

Mark Downen

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Downen", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

District Fish Biologist  
Hood Canal

(360) 202-7005